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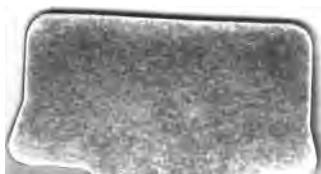
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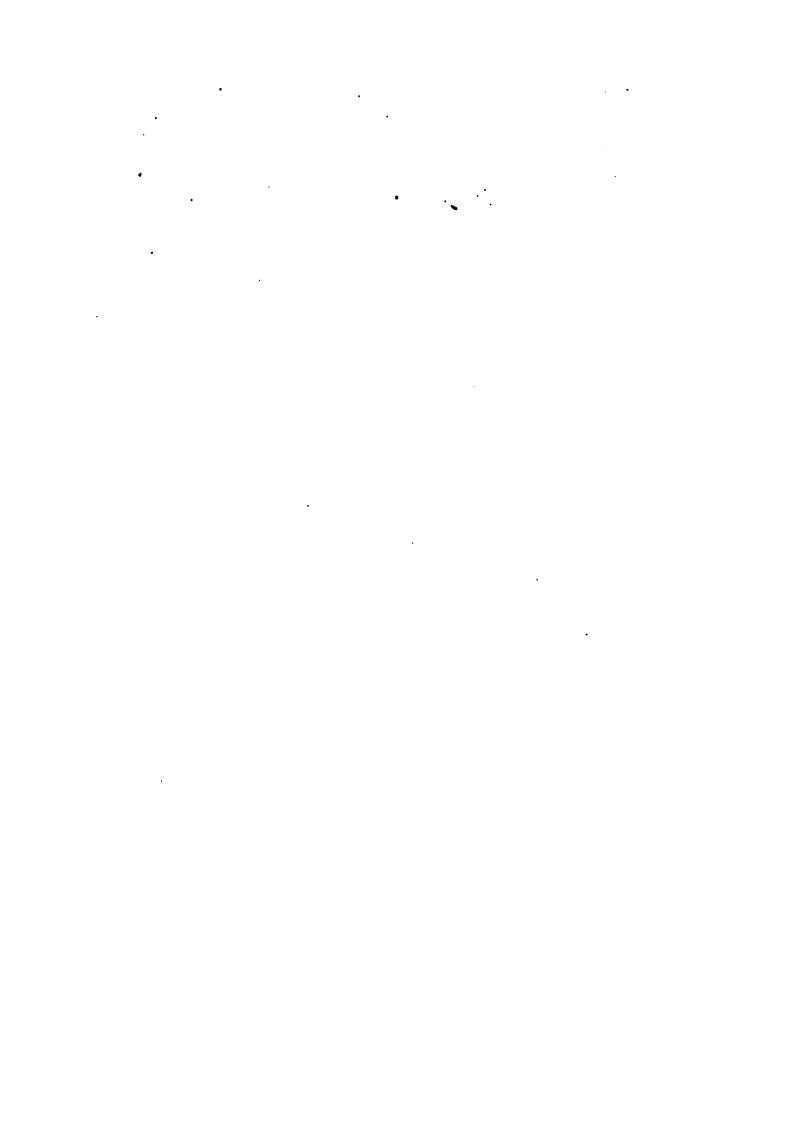
HOME MISSION WORK.

REV. THOMAS CHURCHMAN.



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HOME MISSION WORK.



HOME MISSION WORK:

ITS DUTIES, DIFFICULTIES, AND
ENCOURAGEMENTS.

BY THE

REV. THOMAS COCHRANE,

OF THE PLEASANCE TERRITORIAL CHURCH, EDINBURGH.

With Prefatory Note

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM HANNA, D.D., LL.D.



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TO
THE OFFICE-BEARERS
AND
MEMBERS
OF
THE PLEASANCE CHURCH
THIS
LITTLE BOOK
IS
Most affectionately dedicated
BY
THE AUTHOR.

PREFATORY NOTE.

ONE of the most grateful memories of the past, is that of my association with the writer of the following pages in the mission work of the Pleasance.

So singularly fruitful a ministry as his has been, enables him to speak from a lengthened and very varied experience, and gives weight to what he says.

More and more it will be seen that it is in such Territorial missions that the main hope of the future as to our lapsed city population lies.

These pages will be hailed by many as helpful to their successful conduct.

WILLIAM HANNA.



PREFACE.

THE substance of the following pages was prepared for, and given in an address to, the members of the New College Missionary Society, at one of their ordinary weekly meetings, during the currency of the session.

The name of Dr Chalmers will ever be associated with the Territorial system of missions.

By this system a manageable district is selected, and, through an efficient agency, every family is visited ; the aim and design being to bring the influence of Bible truth to bear upon all, and to endeavour to get every child to attend school, and every adult to wait upon the means of grace.

The object of the writer is to discuss the great and growing question of Territorialism in a purely practical manner, and the three points which are treated of are the following, viz., the mode or manner of working; the agencies employed in the work; and the results of these agencies, as illustrated by the experience of the author in the field with which he is best acquainted, and which he has occupied for the last *twenty years*.

The illustrative cases are *thoroughly genuine*,—uncoloured and unadorned. Truth is not only stranger and stronger than fiction, but is mighty and majestic in its very simplicity, and, like all true beauty, is “when unadorned, adorned the most.”

15th March 1873.



I.

SUGGESTIVE HINTS FOR TERRITORIAL WORK.

ONE may try to conceive, but it will not be easy to describe, the feelings of him who was set down in the centre of some vast forest, and told that these giant trees around him, which have struck their roots deep into the soil, and that heave and wave their mighty branches in the breeze of heaven, must, one and all of them, be laid low by the sweep and power of his own right arm and his own solitary axe.

A kindred feeling may well take possession of

the missionary who is set down in the midst of one of our densely peopled, overcrowded, sweating city districts, and told that this is his sphere of labour—that here he is to strive, and to grapple with sin and misery of almost every kind and character—of every name—ay, nameless.

“ *Where shall I go first?* ” said a friend of the healing art, who had been hurriedly sent for, to deal with the inhabitants of a certain village who were supposed to have partaken of some deadly thing, and thereby to have been poisoned. “ *Where shall I go first?* ” is the language of the devoted missionary. *Where* shall I begin, and *how* shall I undertake work like this? These and similar questions will often be in the heart, if not upon the lip, of the faithful labourer.

To give the direct, the true answer, were a difficult thing. In the words of a sage counsellor, “ *observation and experience* ” are the best teachers. There is no royal road to learning.

There is no royal road here to success. He who would succeed must be prepared for hard labour—to labour as if *all* depended on his own inherent, indomitable, persevering energy, and sturdy toil ; and yet, while so labouring, to feel and realise that “ *all things are of God.*”

As a labourer in the mission field—after more than five-and-twenty years of mission work in town and country, and at the close of twenty years of continuous labour in a city Territorial district—I record a few points and principles that may be interesting to those engaged in such work, and to others who sympathise with such workers.

Standing out prominently in the foreground, let us turn attention to, and regard—

THE SPIRIT OF THE TRUE MISSIONARY.

On an occasion of reference to the late Duke of Wellington, when a change had been made in one of the departments under him, the party

who had suffered from the change suggested to the Duke, that it was *possible* there might have been a mistake. The answer of the noble Duke was characteristic : "There is no mistake, sir ; there can be no mistake ; and there shall be no mistake." Such a reply may give the key-note to the true spirit of missionary effort. God will bless all such effort, if true and real. There is no doubt about this. "There is no mistake," in regard to all work done for God ; "there can be no mistake, and there shall be no mistake."

Let the work, then, be undertaken *hopefully*. Too little attention, perhaps, has been paid to this. The work is too often undertaken as if it were a mere peradventure. Too often is the Lord's work entered on with the feeling, that in the use of means the Lord of the harvest may bless ; while the feeling should rather be, "He will bless." It is not only honouring to God to regard His promise as sure, but it is *dis*-honouring to Him to question the fulfilment

of it. We should go forth in the spirit of the Psalmist's words—"He that goeth forth, and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." In this spirit let there be—

A SURVEY OF THE FIELD.

An accurate survey of the field at the very outset is of vast importance. It is of very great moment to know exactly the strength of the opposing forces; not only the numbers, but, as far as possible, the character of them. Thus will the missionary be enabled to judge what is the best mode of dealing with the district, and how, with the blessing of God, success may be not only looked for, but most thoroughly secured.

With an agency of devoted labourers provided, and the district all divided and subdivided, so as to have not only a division for each agent, or visitor, but a district suited to each, it will be of the last importance that these districts be so

divided that no visitor shall feel that he is overburdened, lest he sink hopelessly beneath the load. With a judicious arrangement as to agency, districts, and divisions, we naturally come to—

THE COMMISSION.

“What are your marching orders?” was the question, pointed and peremptory, of the Iron Duke to one who wished information as to the duties of an army chaplain. What are “the marching orders,” what is the commission, of a true missionary?

Nothing less—nothing else—than to preach the “*unsearchable riches of Christ*.” This grand object is to be kept continually and steadily in view; this can never be over-estimated. How important to aim high—to have a high ideal ever present to the mind! As is the aim, the object, so, under God, will be the issue. The work ought ever to be performed with the highest object in view,—the object of reaching the heart,

dealing faithfully with the conscience, and saving the soul. Is the question put, "*Why, or for what purpose, am I here?*" let the answer be, in the words and spirit of the blessed Redeemer, "to gather the wanderer into the fold; to seek and to save that which was lost."

To accomplish this great end, let every conceivable kind of agency be employed; but with all subsidiary means and agencies, with all suitable societies—temperance and abstinence, literary and social—the missionary of the Cross must ever remember his "marching orders,"—that his first, his last, his main work, is to deal with, to try to reach, the heart; to bring the power of the Cross to bear upon the guilty soul; to bring the lost within the sweep and compass of the healing power, the attractive influence, of the Cross of Christ Jesus. Hence the Word of God should be brought into every home, and the light of an open Bible shine bright and full in every place of meeting. Bible teaching should

be the characteristic of all our schools, and the pulpit should give forth a clear and certain sound—the true words of God. Let us have this great sword of Goliath, for there is none to be compared with, there is none like it. This, through God's blessing, will in due time come to be highly appreciated, duly prized, greatly loved.

“Did ye ask me if I had a Bible?” said a poor old widow in London,—“Did ye ask me if I had a Bible? Thank God I have a Bible. What should I do without my Bible? It was the guide of my youth, and it is the staff of my age; it wounded me, and it healed me; it condemned me, and it acquitted me; it showed me I was a sinner, and it led me to the Saviour; it has given me comfort through life, and I trust it will give me hope in death.” Well might our noble Queen say of the Book of God—“It is the source of England's greatness.” This weapon must be ever plied, and in all circumstances, coupled with earnest and persevering prayer.

With the Cross of Christ Jesus thus preached, and made the grand centre of the mission field, an eye wakeful, tender, anxious, should be kept over all,—a care manifested for all; but most care should be manifested for, and most attention given *first* to—

THE MOST HOPEFUL.

With the Cross for a common centre, the nearer to this, the nearer to Christ; and the nearer to Him, the nearer to all who are His. Regarding the Cross in this aspect—as the grand centre,—then the souls that are nearest to the Cross may be regarded as most hopeful; and those that are most hopeful, speaking in the language of men, are most likely to be won to Christ and His cause. The common-sense view of the ordinary methods and modes of action, baptized with true Christianity, will be of incalculable value here. To speak after the manner of men, least effort will be required to win and woo such

cases to the observances and duties of our common Christianity. By giving *first* and *most* heed to such interesting and hopeful cases, more likely and more speedily will we obtain blessed issues and results; and soon, too, with the blessing from on high, will we have, in souls brought to a knowledge of the truth, some of kindred spirit to help on the good work of the Lord; to sympathise with, and to pray for the labourer. The plan and purpose of the good heathen convert will come into full scope and play,—“*Me teach you, if you teach another.*” The soul thus saved will seek to save others. Like the woman at the well of old, such will say, “*Come, see a man that told me all that ever I did: is not this the Christ?*”

Like the river that is fed by little streams, and gathers volume as it flows, so the stream of holier, purer life, thus joined as if by others, with the tide of the soul flowing fuller and freer, will be like mercy *twice* blessed, and blessed in blessing.

Andrew "*first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus.*"

"One soul is scarcely saved alone,
'Twill seek to let the truth be known ;
Come, it will say, and you shall see
What things the Lord hath done for me."

INDIVIDUALISE AND CONCENTRATE.

That woodman would make a sorry figure, and slow progress, who, as he shouldered his axe, and went through the mighty forest, caused his weapon to ring on, and from, each giant there, but laboured not at the work on any given tree until the mighty monarch fell, and made the woodland thrill.

A boy having been put under the care of one of our teachers, notwithstanding all that teacher's anxiety, and the pupil's earnestness, could not make satisfactory progress—could not be made

to read accurately and fluently. What caused the difficulty? wherein lay the obstacle? The tyro, labouring under a defect of the visual organ, looked at the whole page *at once*, instead of taking line by line, and "*line upon line*."

There is the same likelihood of failure if the eye of the missionary rests upon the whole field, and does not individualise and concentrate. Let individual cases be selected; let single families be chosen; let these be visited, frequently and regularly, spoken to kindly, dealt with affectionately and faithfully; let effort be continued in regard to, and concentrated on, such cases, until they become as if saturated with the truth, while made the subjects of earnest prayer; let the *living* soul thus be brought to bear upon the *dead* in sin, and, with God's blessing, the issue will often be, beyond expectation, gratifying and cheering indeed. Expect great things. "*Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full*;" but, "*gather up the fragments*," and note—

THE POWER OF LITTLE THINGS.

“Take care of the pennies, and the pounds will take care of themselves.” Thus we speak of money ; so may we speak, figuratively, when estimating the value of labour, prayer, and pains, “*in the work of the Lord.*” The happiness of most people depends much on “*little things.*” A very small chink will admit the sunbeam into the dwelling ; and how it cheers that home ! A very little incident may be the chosen instrument for good to some soul once perishing for lack of knowledge. The feather in the breeze will tell how blows the wind ; the straw on the stream will mark the flow of the water. The bend, or bias, of the branch or bough, tells of the prevailing winds in any district of our country,—even the tiny lamp of the glow-worm may guide and cheer the weary traveller. And as you would consider and regard, and learn from the one class, “*little things*” in nature ; so from the other,

"*little things*" in providence and grace. Hence the importance of improving opportunities, and *watching* for souls.

Many a time, when we may have been labouring *seemingly* in vain, some trivial incident may prove the opportunity which is to be the key for opening up the sin-barred heart,—the instrument of turning another sinner from the error of his way, saving a soul from death, and hiding a multitude of sins. Thus watching, praying, labouring—

LET US BEWARE OF ROUTINE.

The mill-horse regularly goes his round of duty, without getting out of his daily rut—without making progress. Much duty may be done, without any real and true progress being made.

It is true, and let the truth never be forgotten, that *duty* is ours, *results* are God's. Is it not true also, "and pity 'tis, 'tis true," that this very truth may be made a pillow, a false peace-giving

pillow of repose, instead of a fresh incentive to new life, to greater devotedness ?

“There’ll be a bonnie harvest, sir, when ye’re no here to see’t,” said one, with a view to cheer us in the work, and to comfort when she thought us downcast and cheerless. “So we hope and pray,” was the reply ; “but we would desire, at least, to see the ‘*first fruits*’ here.” To obtain such results, how important, how essential, that there should be daily, ceaseless, prayerful effort, and that everything like mere routine in duty should be watched and warded off with lynx-eyed care. If the Word of God never returns to Him void ; if, as surely as the rain and snow that come from heaven, and return not thither until they have watered the earth, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, the Word of God, if faithfully preached, will never fail in its intended issues, but will accomplish that whereunto it has been sent ; then, how firm should be the step, how steady the aim, of the

missionary of the Cross, and how confidently should he go forth to the work of the Lord, confident in the grace and strength of God Most High, even when "*faint, yet pursuing!*"





II.

AGENCIES EMPLOYED IN THE PLEASANCE MISSION.

HAVING glanced at the mode or method of working a Territorial mission district, it may now be interesting to turn attention to the *agencies* employed in the district superintended by the writer, and the relative measure of success which, with the Divine blessing, has attended them.

I. THE CHURCH.

Situated near the centre of the street called the Pleasance—in former days one of the principal thoroughfares to the city of Edinburgh,

from the south, and so named, it is supposed, from its having been the site of a convent dedicated to St Placentia in Popish times, no remains of which now exist—the church has been erected whose missionary agencies will be shortly detailed in the following pages.

In the summer of 1852, the Free Church Presbytery of Edinburgh appointed a committee, with the view of forming a new Territorial charge within the bounds, and devolved the convenership upon the Rev: Dr Hanna, son-in-law and biographer of Dr Chalmers. The kirk-session of St John's, at that time ably presided over by the late much-lamented Dr Guthrie, and Dr Hanna, accordingly removed their missionary from a district occupied by them in the Grassmarket, to the chosen field of operations, which was entered upon in December 1852.

The first place of meeting, used both as a *church* and schoolroom, consisted of a couple of *rooms thrown into one*. This was shortly

enlarged, and, in its turn, gave place to an old brush factory, which was made use of until schoolrooms had been built, accommodating about 300 scholars, and costing about £1000. These were opened in January 1854, and the little congregation continued to worship in one of them till the church was built.

Capable of containing about 500 people, the church was erected at an expense, including site, of £1288, and, in January 1859, was opened for public worship by the late Dr Guthrie. A year afterwards, in January 1860, the missionary was ordained to the office of the holy ministry.

It is only simple justice to add that, after the usual building grants and Government allowances, the congregation of St John's liberally met and defrayed all expenses,—church and schools being handed over to the Pleasance congregation free of debt; and while many members of St John's contributed largely to the fund *for securing a manse to the congregation, an*

endowment was provided for the minister through the liberality of Dr Hanna and friends, with a view of leaving him free to continue to devote himself to Territorial work in the district.

In connection with the congregation, there are *three* regular diets of worship, a Bible-class and prayer-meeting, held each Sabbath ; and church and schoolroom are occupied variously on almost every day of the week, while meetings, in addition, are held frequently throughout the mission district.

II. THE SCHOOLS.

Next in order and importance to the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is the teaching—*“ the godly up-bringing ”*—of the young in day and Sabbath schools. To be thoroughly successful, the Territorial mission must have connected with it schools for the young. In no Territorial district *will it be found that* the school can be dispensed *with, any more than the church.*

Accordingly, in the Pleasance Mission, the church agency and school took origin almost simultaneously. The school has often been represented as a "*nursery*" for the church; and the church may be fitly termed the "*nursing mother*" to the school. Hence the mutual action and re-action between them,—the missionary gathering in the lambs of the flock for the school, and the teacher, in his turn, training his youthful and interesting charge for the church.

This healthy action has been singularly manifest in the work of God among the young in this Mission, the rich fruits of which have been reaped abundantly; so much so, that very many of the pupils have grown up to be teachers, both in day and Sabbath schools; while the present communion roll has inscribed on it many names of those who came *mere infants* to the schools. The list of office-bearers in the church bears the names of several who were once among the youth of the district; and one of the early members of

the church is now among the most earnest and successful of home missionaries.

Before leaving this department, it may be noticed that there were (until lately, when death cut the tie) *four* generations in one family line, all in connection with the congregation, who had not been members of any other church. One of the first *twenty-four* members of the "*little flock*," was an aged widow, who sat down at the first communion-table with two daughters and two sons-in-law, and was spared to see all her family members of the mission church; her *grandchildren* and *great-grandchildren* growing up connected with the church and schools; while one *son-in-law* was an *elder*, a *grandson-in-law* a *deacon*, and a *grand-daughter* a *Sabbath-school teacher*.

What a little child may do.—One Sabbath day, the missionary was agreeably surprised by observing an old man, who had often resisted his *appeals*, now worshipping, apparently with the *deepest interest*, in the house of God. How

came *he*? Who had succeeded in bringing *him* there? He had a little grandchild, who at the school had learned to sing of Jesus, and loved to hear “the sweet story of old.” She had been taught to love the sanctuary, and to try to take others with her; and so she put her little dimpled hand within the big brown hand of her grandfather, and led him, with artless simplicity, to the place of worship. Nor was this all. That same old man, in due time, became a member of the church; and, better far, he lived and died as a true Christian; and while he has gone to “*the general assembly of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven,*” the grandchild lives to adorn the doctrine of GOD her SAVIOUR—a regular attender of the Bible-class, and a consistent member of the same church. May not that grandchild say, at last, of her old grandfather, “Lord, here am I, and the grandfather Thou hast given me,—my grandfather by nature—*my child by grace!*”

III. THE BIBLE CLASS.

The value of this class can scarcely be over-estimated.

One of the most manifestly missing links in the social system, is the want of home instruction and home catechising. Home impressions are lasting impressions, and the influence of home example for good or evil, even in the early stages of infant life, is incalculable. What melancholy proofs may be often heard and seen of this ! From the lips of lisping infancy, on the one hand, may be heard the oath profane, or word obscene ; and mantling on the youthful, noble brow, how often may be seen the gathering cloud of rage, and the bold, defiant scowl of wrath. On the other hand, caught from a mother's praying lips, or a father's earnest accents, may be heard, breathed with most touching tenderness and *infant artlessness*, the name of Jesus, ever sweet to a believer's ear ; or may be seen the lowly,

lovely attitude of childhood's bended knee. Yes, a mother's example on her knees in prayer, a father's reverend, chastened mien when he reads the Word of God—a mother's touching, tender, winning tones, while she hymns the love of Jesus to her infant charge—a father's earnestness as he speaks of the wondrous work of redemption—the love that's breathed from mother's heart and lights a mother's eye—a father's loving smile and a mother's winsome word—these, and numberless, nameless touches of Nature's fondest, fairest pencillings, with "*thoughts that breathe and words that burn,*" will assuredly leave their impression in the after course of the family.

The reverse of this how sad to contemplate ! An education for evil, fraught with consequences irreparable, inconceivable, not only for time, but for eternity ! How important to try and counteract this by *Bible-teaching* !

While it is true that no amount of public teaching can ever fully compensate for the want

of home instruction, yet all the more that the *one* is wanting, should the *other* be supplied. The roll of young men and women attending the Bible-class for some years past, has numbered about *one hundred*.

Various plans have been tried to make this class interesting. Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" has frequently been the chosen text-book, while lectures have been given both upon the "Progress" and "Holy War," until Bunyan's name has become in reality a "*household word*" throughout the district. Courses of lectures on the "*Christian Evidences*," "*Confession of Faith*," and "*The Sum of Saving Knowledge*," with the *Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly*, were found to be very useful; while the *notes* taken by several of the young people from the course on the "*Evidences*," gave clear and unmistakable proof of how thoroughly the *subjects had been apprehended*.

After all, however, it has been thought that

the *Bible* and *Shorter Catechism* form the best text-books ; and, after a trial of not a few plans, the present course is based upon the Word of God, and the time-honoured, justly-revered Catechism.

IV. THE TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

This society is placed second to the purely religious public agencies, for *two* reasons : *first*, because in a mission district there is no agency certainly that can be said to be more absolutely essential ; and, *secondly*, because in *this Mission* no agency has been more successful.

It were needless to depict cases which occur so frequently in Territorial work, showing how *very urgently* the agencies of Temperance Societies are required. Such cases may be named "*legion*." They have been, and are, so often met with, that the missionary may scarcely think of recording them in his journal. Nevertheless, there are *instances* which stand out in bold relief in the

performance of regular district work, giving impressions that live and last, written as if with the point of a diamond, and engraven with lead upon the rock.

Several of these cases are indelibly photographed in the writer's mind, and from memory's page he will try and reproduce them.

The *first* case is one deeply and truly painful, type of a class of cases which every missionary must have met with. The party referred to was well known as a most respectable member of society. She was the wife of a truly sober, decent husband, and both were much respected in the district. The husband was infirm, and for a long time unable to attend the house of God; but the wife was noted for her regularity of attendance.

A dark cloud hovered over that once happy home. Death knocked at the door, and snatched the husband from the side of his loving wife, and with him, too, her support and stay. The staff

of life gone, the widow buffeted the billows with determined will and resolution. She bravely met her altered circumstances, and seemed to bid fair for taking her place among those widows indeed, who live to dignify and adorn the profession of the Christian faith, and appear to have the special smile and favour of THE LORD, their MAKER being their husband, whose name is "THE LORD OF HOSTS." A deeper cloud, however, gathered over that widow's dwelling, and burst with awful fury, sweeping with it every source of support,—clothes, furniture, character, "*house and hould.*" Alas for the day! She had mingled with questionable company. She had joined with them in the convivial glass. A thirst had been created for strong drink, and she drank, until she first neglected the house of God, and then pawned her clothes, and could not attend. She next lost *caste*; was turned from her wonted work; pawned all that could be carried to that pathway to ruin, stript her bed,

and sold her furniture. One day, in "*the horrors*," after a debauch, she came knocking at the door asking help. Upon going to visit her in her now miserable dwelling, there she sat in a corner of the room, swept and empty; and as we stood and gazed around—never shall we forget her!—she sat wringing her hands and sobbing in the bitterness of her spirit, as she hissed out these words, as drunkards alone can use them, "*O sir! it's drink, drink, drink, drink, that's dune it a'!*"

Yes, drink has "*dune it a'*," is an oft-repeated phrase; so common, indeed, that the world moves on unheeding, and the church stands overpowered and paralysed, as if knowing not what to do, while souls are perishing and going to an undone eternity!

Look at this other picture!—It is that of a lone woman. She lived in a garret-room, and supported herself by charring. She had been living in utter neglect of the means of grace, but through course of time had been persuaded to go

to church. She was very poor, and required and received occasional help—bread and other things, with a little coal for the cold wintry day. She seemed to go on well for a time. She began to wait on the means of grace regularly, took a deep interest in the words spoken, and *appeared* even to have been under deep impressions by the truth preached. Forgetting, however, to watch her old habit, her besetting sin returned with double force and fury. Again she began to drink. Deeper than ever did she drink, and deeper, too, did she sink in misery, until she was brought under the influence of *delirium tremens*. After being in this condition she was visited frequently. True, indeed, appeared to be her sorrow, unfeigned, one would have thought, sometimes, her penitence ; but, alas ! she only recovered to return again to her folly ; and after weeks and months of this, repenting, reforming, sinning, and anew promising amendment, and after a hard conflict, she sank under the fell blow of the re-

lentless destroyer, with words like these on her lips in reference to him who records them, "*He visited me when sick ; he helped me in my need ; he prayed for me when I was in trouble ; he preached to me the Gospel, and yet I am dying and lost for a' !*"

Nor is this case, alas ! singular. Look again ! Here is a strong man in the prime of life, with loving wife, and children full of happiness. Look at their dwelling, it is the very picture of neatness and beauty ; it seems to have so much of happiness—a very model home—that you might say of it, "*'tis' like a little heaven below.*" When the visitor is introduced, the mother is busy sewing, the father is out at work, and the little children are crowing and frolicking in gladness and glee. The Sabbath dawns, and hails them to the house of God. Yonder sit the husband and wife, with a child on either side of them. See the tear-drop moistens that strong man's eye, and courses down his cheek ;—the love

of Jesus being the theme, and the death of Jesus the grand climax to the story of the Cross;—while the deep-drawn sigh tells how much the happy wife experiences of true joy, as she gazes, now on her husband's countenance, and then at the children of their love. It is a sight at which angels may rejoice. Surely that family is not far from the kingdom of God; and the missionary breathes freely, when, in his day-dreams, he thinks of lost ones found, and banished ones brought home.

How often the frost blights the fairest blossoms, and turns the anticipated fruit into rottenness and decay! How often, too, has strong drink blighted the fondest, fairest promise of better fruit, and left the labourer in the field shorn of his brightest prospects and most fondly cherished hopes! So in the case before us. Our friend was subject to periodical fits of drinking, and, during one of such occasions, let us visit that once happy, happy home. There, again,

you will see the strong man, but how unlike his former self! His look is fierce, his eyes are bloodshot, his speech is rambling, and in his whole appearance you trace, too surely, those marks of misery which follow in the train of drunkenness. He has got his bed on his shoulders, and is just in the act of carrying it away to sell it for drink. The smaller things of the former comfortable home are all gone. The beautiful little prints and pictures that adorned the walls are all sold. Chairs, stools, tables, dishes, have all disappeared. The children and the tender wife crouch in a corner, where a pallet of straw to lie on, and a cold hard stone to sit on, are the only remanent articles of what seemed once a very *oasis* in the desert! And what has done all this? It is not want of work. The wife is affectionate, and the children are loving and obedient. You lay hold on the arm of the man who is the occasion of this misery, and, as you try to arrest him in his mad career, you ask

what all this means? He tells you "he *knows* he is going to ruin; he *feels* it, but he *must* drink; he *cannot* help himself, though he should sell his *soul*, as he has sold his *bed*, for drink!"

The Temperance Society of this Mission originated through an address given by the late much-lamented Professor Miller—an address of most singular power and beauty, on almost the last, if not the very last, public appearance of his most useful career in the great temperance reformation. It was nursed with all the winning tenderness and anxious care for which the late Lady Mary Hamilton was so distinguished. For about nine years the society has existed, and has been, not only beyond expectation, but almost without precedent in that department, successful. Having been present at its inauguration, having watched its rise and progress, its steady course, its precious issues, but not having had the *personal* superintendence of it, the writer is free to say, and has good reason to affirm, that he does not

know any agency that has been more thoroughly wrought, and more signally useful, in the district. The labours of the committee of management have been, and are, beyond all price and praise. Composed of working men, the committee has been a *thorough working* one. The work was a hard, a great one, to accomplish ; but it has been done nobly and successfully.

And *how* was it done? It reminds one of what a little American boy once said. After a great snowstorm, a little fellow began to clear a path through a large snowbank before his grandmother's door. He had nothing but a small shovel to work with. "How do you expect to get through that drift?" asked a man passing by. "*By keeping at it, that's how,*" said the boy, cheerfully.

Yes, "*that's how.*" It was by "*keeping at it,*" always "*at it,*" all "*at it,*"—aye, all "*at it.*" Each member worked at the great work with a will and a power almost unparalleled ; each en-

couraged his fellow-worker, and hence the gratifying result. Each year of its existence has seen enrolled, on an average, about 400 members; while the last report states, that since the time of its institution, the society has registered upwards of 3600. No one would expect that all who have been enrolled as members have stood true to the pledge and cause which they have professed to espouse. No, certainly no! but a *very large proportion* have; and, while perhaps there have been few private societies which have enrolled more members, there has been perhaps none which has had greater and better results. Certainly none with which the writer is acquainted. There are members and office-bearers in the mission church, devoted and exemplary, who were first brought to wait upon the means of grace through the instrumentality of this society. "*In the strength of THE LORD GOD, looking unto Jesus,*" is the motto of the society's pledge card; "*in the strength of THE LORD GOD*"

has much good been accomplished, and many a saved one is now going on his way rejoicing, "*looking unto JESUS.*"

As an illustration of *individualising* and *concentrating* of effort, the devotion of one of the members to the good cause may here be recorded.

A fellow-workman had been apt to fall into intemperate habits. These were, as they always are, hard to overcome. Again and again had the party tried and failed, and as often had his companion been disappointed. How *should* he do it? How *should* he succeed, and gain his object, after so many failures? For *six* long months this true friend renounced for his companion's sake all other society. He walked and talked with him; he went to and from the workshop with him, and never left him until he walked in company with him to, and saw him safely *housed* in, the sanctuary, where now he is a useful and an earnest member. "*That's how!*"

A drunkard rescued.—A feeling prevails among


many that it is almost hopeless to rescue a *confirmed* drunkard. It is certainly not a very common occurrence. Is not Divine grace, however, omnipotent? Can it not work *effectually* in the heart even of the most debased? It *has* done so—it *may* do so again.

The case before us is that of a woman who, with her husband, was *confirmed* in a course of drunkenness. The husband earned good wages, was a man of great ability, had an aptitude for doing almost any kind of work; but through drink he and his wife were almost always half stupefied, and the family was in a state of great misery. Many a time the missionary had almost given up this case in despair; week after week, month after month, ay, year after year, were the means employed, but all, *seemingly*, in vain. Sometimes the door was shut against the visit made, and many a time the missionary had to retire with a heavy heart. The time, however, came; and what a change! The wife, through

Divine grace, became a "*new creature* ; temperance paved the way for the Gospel, and grace saved that drunkard's soul. She, who formerly bolted the door against the missionary's visit, lived to welcome him as a regular visitor in the day of her need ; and, as she lived for years after, to prove her Christianity, so she died in the hope of that eternal life which is laid up for the redeemed above.

V. DISTRICT MEETINGS.

"*A bow at a venture.*"—A perfect stranger, and scarce knowing one solitary individual in the district, the missionary, when commencing his labours, after visiting for some days to make known the object of the Mission, held the first public service on a *Sabbath evening*, in a little room furnished and prepared for the purpose, up a dark and dingy stair. The thought was suggested to him that if the Word of God should, on that occasion, be so preached as to leave a



HOME MISSION-WORK.

lasting impression on even one heart, then there would be a kindred feeling awakened, and mutual sympathy called forth between him and one other at least, that, with the Divine blessing would extend in its influence. So did it prove. That first sermon, upon the evidence of, and from the statement made by, the party influenced about eighteen months after, was owned of God in awakening her soul. A part of the simple record made at the time regarding the case is here quoted:—

“A. B., since hearing the opening sermon of the Mission, has been led to see the necessity for a different course of life; has been, to use her own words, like one awakened out of sleep. The testimony of all concerned in this case is very gratifying and satisfactory.” She lived long to prove the reality of the change.

In all Territorial districts there will be found many not only living in entire neglect of the sanctuary, but many of that number who will

scarcely be persuaded by prayer and pains to avail themselves of the privilege. To meet such cases, the devoted missionary will often be found to try and bridge over the difficulty by *taking the church to them*; sometimes, perhaps, even taking possession of the home of the neglectful, and making a church in *their house*. The effect of such little gatherings is often very blessed indeed. By these meetings there is not only opened a way for bringing the Gospel to the very *homesteads* of the careless and prayerless, but it is also, under God, a very fruitful source of augmenting the central gatherings.

One of the most useful members of the Mission relates, as his own experience, how by this agency especially he was won to the public ordinances of the church. He was ill to gain over. Many months of prayerful effort were spent, but "*by keeping at it*," with God's blessing on the means, he was at last enlisted in the good *cause*; and how useful he has been since in gain-

ing others, the future only can reveal. How devoted he has been cannot be told.

The services at these fireside gatherings should not, as a general rule, be lengthened above an hour, for many reasons. Mothers cannot conveniently give longer time from household duties. Short *telling* addresses at such meetings will ordinarily be most useful and acceptable. The grand object being to deal chiefly and closely with those who have not been accustomed to much serious thinking about religious subjects, anything fitted to weary and repel should be carefully avoided. How all-important to leave a good impression, and, by this short pithy service, to beget a thirst for the more *extended*, if not more formal, services of the *house of God*! It would not be an easy thing to say how many members of the church first found their footing towards the sanctuary through the influence of these district meetings. They will not only prove useful—almost essential—in the *forming*

of a Territorial congregation, but will be of immense benefit *after it has been formed*, both as a means of dealing with the neglectful members of the congregation, and of reaching those beyond the pale of the church.

“*Bread upon the waters.*”—Shortly after the commencement of the Mission, a young woman had been induced to wait upon the means of grace. Without the least appearance of earnestness, sometimes without even outward decorum, she continued to attend. She heard the truth as preached *apparently* without any interest. At the class for young women she was affectionately dealt with. In private she was conversed with, but *for years* there appeared to be no impression, only that she became more attentive. The seed seemed very long in springing. It did so at last, and, *after twelve years* of deep rooting, it sprung up, giving rich promise of a precious harvest to the glory of God. “*Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.*”

VI. MOTHERS' MEETINGS.

The Mission was more than usually fortunate in the parties who superintended this class of meetings. The chief mover, at the commencement of the work, was the devoted and gentle Lady Mary Hamilton, who not only drew around her a noble band of like-minded Christian ladies, but secured, in a remarkable degree, the love and confidence of the district people; so much so, that to name her in the district yet, is to speak her praise. She rests from her labours, but her works do follow her. Her successors have nobly carried on the work so auspiciously begun; and, in point of numbers attending, and interest manifested in the meetings, this agency still may be regarded as *a great success*.

In reference to these meetings, however, in many cases there is, if not "*a missing link*," something wanting. The chain, while it may *reach*, does not *attach*, the lowest class of mothers.

It is not that the chain is too short, but that the attaching link fails to embrace them—*they will not come*. There is a class of mothers, as of the *non-church going* population generally, for whom *district* mothers' meetings are urgently needed. The meetings require to be taken to them. They will not, at least, come to the central meeting.

On this point it may be proper to state what has been experienced in this district.

It is, doubtless, very humbling to the writer, and very solemn as regards the parties referred to, yet true it is that there are not a few persons in the district who have lived all through these "*twenty years*" of mission work, who have been regularly visited, plied with the means of grace in private, prayed with and pleaded with, most earnestly and affectionately, and yet, who are *now*, as they were *then*, neglectful of all public ordinances, living "*without hope, and without God in the world.*" Their cases very much resemble that of one who had lived through a great

revival movement, and who, when others had been saved, had yet, from the depths of his heart to lament, and say, "*I was not one of them ; many were saved, but I was not one of them !*" Like, yet unlike the cases ; for those to whom the writer refers are *unsaved*, and yet do *not feel it*,—do not grieve because of it.

It is true that a considerable percentage of *every* district live and die "*without hope*,"—die as they live—live and die *unsaved* ; for, as men live they die, "*and after death the judgment !*"

Is it also true that about *three-fourths* of the negligence of ordinances, and prevailing misery in every district, are to be traced to the debasing effects of strong drink ?

VII. VISITATION.

Visiting is a very useful and an essential part of the labours of the Territorial missionary. There is no part of the work in which greater *tact* and *care* are required than this. The *object*

in visiting, the *mode* or *manner* of visiting, the *parties* to be visited, the *time* and *place* of visiting, should all be carefully studied. There is, at the outset, an absolute necessity for keeping in view *the great object* of visiting, if the time so spent is not to be lost, or worse than lost. While very great faithfulness should ever be kept in view in carrying on this work, it should be faithfulness coupled with affection, Christian charity, and true judiciousness. Speaking generally, visits should be short. Our medical advisers set us a valuable example. They go *directly* to their work, give their advice, write their prescriptions, and retire. Not that this can always be the case with the *spiritual* adviser. His visits may require sometimes to be more protracted ; but the *directness* of the *medical* adviser should ever be a *model* for the *spiritual* guide. There is one word which embraces almost all that need or can be said of the *mode* or *manner* of visiting ; it is that which includes all—*adaptation*.

The *parties* to be visited should not be passed over without notice. In the beginning of a Territorial work, it will be *needful* to visit, first of all, parties in the district who *should* form the constituency of the attendance at the meetings held, either on Sabbaths or week days. Having once obtained such a constituency, whether large or small, let these parties be visited regularly—almost, if not altogether, weekly. Thus the missionary will most probably retain, and be most likely to increase, the attendance at the meetings, while gradually extending the circle. Like the ripple on the surface of the water, his influence will reach from centre to circumference, until the whole district be made to feel the blessed effect thereof.

The *time* of visiting, too, is not without its importance. Let the time chosen be one when the parties visited are most likely to be in a position to profit from the visit. A woman who came always very early to church, on being

asked the reason, said, "I make it part of my religion not to disturb the religion of others." The missionary can make it part of his *mission* to try to do most good without unnecessarily breaking in upon the family arrangements of those visited.

VIII. TRACT DISTRIBUTION.

It may scarcely be needful to state, that, in the prosecution of his mission work, the devoted missionary will never go to duty without bearing with him the short and pithy utterances of Divine truth which our Tract Societies are so well fitted to supply. How much good has been done by a single tract !

Like Lydia, whose heart was opened that she attended to the things that were spoken by Paul ; like the African woman, whose heart had been opened to receive the missionary through a Testament which had been given to her by the "*white man*," how many hearts have been touched, if not opened, by means of a tract ! How much

more might be done ! “ *A tract may find him
who a sermon flies.*”

The effect produced on the writer's mind by a tract is as fresh now as if the circumstance had happened yesterday. He was returning from school. A carriage was driving along, and, as it passed, something was gently and kindly dropped from the window. On being picked up, it was found to be a thrilling tract upon *Eternity*, with a little ginger-bread cake enclosed, to entice the boy or girl into whose hands it might fall. Who that gentleman and lady were, the writer does not know, but the effect produced still lives, and many, many a time has he given away a copy of that same tract, with feelings of profound gratitude to the Giver of all good, and breathed the prayer that it too might be blessed.

“ This world is full of beauty,
Like angel worlds above ;
And if each did his duty,
It would be full of love.”

IX. LECTURES, YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETIES, LIBRARY,
AND SAVINGS' BANK.

In the earlier stages especially of any thoroughly equipped mission, lectures on instructive and interesting subjects may be given with very good results. A Young Men's Christian and Literary Association is always of great use, and should be tended with great care. A mission without a savings' bank and library would certainly be destitute of *two* very valuable agencies.

In the earlier years of the Mission there was a junior and senior savings' bank, both of which did good service in the district, the senior bank alone having for the first year of its existence passed upwards of £100 through its books. Owing, however, to many similar agencies in the immediate neighbourhood, the senior branch has been discontinued, while the junior still continues in great efficiency.


For working men it will be found highly beneficial to combine the "*Friendly Society*" with the "*Savings' Bank*." The writer once heard the Rev. Dr Duncan, founder of savings' banks, say, with great earnestness, that the *latter* was not complete without the *former*. In times of prosperity the hard-wrought artisan gives his savings to the one ; in days of adversity, when the little stock in the bank is exhausted, he can draw from the other ; and, when his course of toil on earth is ended, his sorrowing friends may receive a sum sufficient to lay his cold remains in a befitting manner "beneath the green grass sod."

Benefit of Savings' Banks.—An illustration of the benefit of savings' banks may be had from the following incident. One of the first depositors called, wishing an interview with the writer. He said he had come to consult about the purchase of a certain property which had been exposed for sale. Looking somewhat surprised that the

party should be possessed of means, and that *he* should be consulted as to the outlay of the money, the writer waited an explanation, and the following was the reply :—" Sir, I owe all that I have in the world to you, and I thought I could not do better than consult you, through whose influence I gathered the money, as to the best way of investing it."

X. PRAYER.

It is surely quite unnecessary to dwell upon the necessity for earnest prayer, in order to secure the blessing from on high upon the agencies employed. What were *all* agencies without the blessing? How is it that the blessing can be obtained but in answer to truly earnest prayer? "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." "Yet for all these things will I be inquired of by the *house of Israel* to do it for them."



Prayer may be said to be the mainspring of all duty. The words of another may be fitly extended to all agencies and labour. He says, "Prayer is the wing of wisdom, the torch of teaching, the lamp of learning, the sun of service;" and it may be added—the secret of all true success in labour for the Lord.

How often, and how earnestly, John Welsh prayed! Luther knew well the power of prayer. He calls it the life of study. Brainerd, in his devoted labours among the North American Indians, gives clear proof and evidence of what he felt in regard to it,—"*My soul hung on God, as my only portion.*" The sainted M'Cheyne used to lay it down as a rule never to see the face of man, in any duty, until he had first seen the face of God in prayer.

Is there any one who has ever risen to great eminence in the Church of Christ, whether in the pulpit or in the field of missionary enter-

prise, who did not find the source of his strength
at the Throne of Grace ?

“Restraining prayer, we cease to fight.
Prayer makes the Christian’s armour bright ;
And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.”





III.

SOME RESULTS OF THE PLEASANCE MISSION.


THE field in which the writer has laboured for the last *twenty years* consecutively, contains a population of about *two thousand*. When entered on—the statistics are not his—it was found that of this population *one-third* were living in entire neglect of the means of grace ; *one-third* were occasional hearers at *some* church, or *any* church ; and *one-third* only were in full communion with the various Christian denominations. While this was the state of the district as regards sanctuary attendance and church membership, there were from 150 to 200 children, of age to go to school, running

wild in the full enjoyment of city Arab life ; and yet again, in the words of the devoted missionary who took up the statistics of the field, the district was "*in a deplorable condition, both as regards temporal and spiritual things*"—church and school:

Such was the field when assumed *twenty years ago*. What has been the issue of all the visiting, sowing, prayer, and pains ?

A work of this nature cannot be satisfactorily tabulated ; the picture cannot be truly put upon the canvas. Mere figures do not give an adequate idea,—they can only deal with *external* results. The greatest part of such a work, like the roots of a tree, must be hidden from the world's eye ; the day alone can and will declare it.

Figures or statistics here can only be regarded as a sort of index to the work—the external implying, but not unfolding, the internal. Figures are something like the reading on the *indices* of the dial-plate, but do not unfold the



work, or working within. What are the readings on the dial-plate here? What the issues in *externals*—the mere figures of the case—the results of these twenty years' labour?

There have been, in all, admitted to the membership of the church in this district, 1938; of this number 974, — more than one-half—had never been in communion with any Christian church; 404, in addition, were admitted as if they had never been in communion, having been admitted *de novo*, and having been found in the district *as lapsed* from communion in some Christian church,—some of them for many, many years; while, in addition, there were admitted, in full communion with some Christian church, 560, a very large proportion of whom were from country congregations, and coming into the mission district as residents—giving the above number, 1938.

This mission had no nucleus from any other congregation.

Furnished with a devoted agency, and under the leadership of one who was so thoroughly qualified to guide with his counsel, the work was carried on amid *encouragement* and *discouragement*, until, about *eighteen months* after the commencement of the work, leave was obtained to congregate the "*little flock*," and *twenty-four* communicants sat down, for the first time, at the table of the Lord.

From *seven* persons—the number present at the *first Sabbath forenoon* service; and from *twenty-four* communicants—the number on the first communion roll—the membership has increased to 777, the largest number on the roll of the congregation. Again and again has the membership been reduced, by means of drafts to other churches, and unless additional church accommodation can be provided, of which there is urgent need, a similar process must again become necessary.

The success of the school has been equally

satisfactory, and the schoolroom has been already enlarged, to accommodate the increasing attendance.

It should here be stated also, that the success of the Mission is, in a great measure, due to the deep interest taken by the members themselves in the extension of the work. How many of the members have been brought by friends and neighbours, who, blessed themselves, have in effect said, "*Come thou with us, and we will do thee good.*" This desire cannot be too much encouraged. Whenever any man is blessed through the truth, how all-important that he too should be a soul-seeker ! "I could never understand what you meant," said a hearer, "by urging upon us to try and bring others to Christ, until the day when the truth was brought home to my own soul, and then I could not rest until I ran across the *court* to tell another what the Lord had done for me."

The present sketch would be unsatisfactory if


it did not give something like results of a lasting and permanent nature. Here it becomes us always to speak with caution. Nevertheless, it were dishonour to our great Lord and Master if we did not state what we believe to be true indeed, that the Mission has been the means of saving not a few souls. It were an easy thing to point to many who have been blessed through the Mission—to point to homes lit up with the sunshine of Divine grace and truth, where “*the melody of joy and health*” is heard continually—praise and gratitude to God—happy, holy homes! It might be recorded of not a few, how, both temporally and spiritually, they have greatly prospered since becoming members of the church. One might tell of those who were *labourers*, now to a large extent having become themselves the *employers of labour*, and filling appointments of trust and distinction. One might speak of happy, yea, triumphant deathbeds, where the departed have *gone exulting* to the rest and the reward—the

crown and the kingdom that never fade away. Many precious "*first fruits*" have been already gathered, to the praise and glory of His grace "from whom all blessings flow." There are not a few who are living examples of the power of true godliness, "*adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour.*" How cheering, Sabbath after Sabbath, to look around the densely-packed little church, and think how many of the worshippers have been gathered in through the instrumentality of the Mission !

Warning from a dying-bed.—Under this head may be ranked one who, through drink, lived very neglectful of ordinances, but was made to feel and entertain the real state of the question regarding his soul, before his death. In his own experience there *appeared* to be a true awakening and deep earnestness about the things of his peace. Whether he really obtained the priceless pearl—salvation for his own soul—the writer will not affirm,—he has not sufficiently full and

clear grounds for affirming; but he has good cause to record, and cannot but state the fact, that this man died, warning his children against neglect of the means of grace, and, pleading with them, gave it to them as *his dying charge*, to wait on the ordinances of religion in the very sanctuary which he had so often, while in health, despised!

An orphan boy.—In course of visiting, when entering upon the work of the Mission, the case of a poor widow very much attracted the missionary's attention. She was really and thoroughly respectable and Christian. She had been left to the tender mercies of a cold world, in charge of an only son, a lovely boy, just bursting into the stage of early youth. The son was tended and watched by the mother with the most scrupulous and jealous care, and happily did they live together in their little, plainly-furnished room. Disease having laid its stern hand upon the mother, she *speedily* yielded to the sway of "the king of



terrors," dying with perfect confidence in her God and SAVIOUR, with these words upon her lips, "*Peace, peace—perfect peace!*" The course of the orphan boy, who had thus been committed to the care of Him who is the orphan's stay, was anxiously and tenderly regarded by those who had become so interested in the mother, and their hopes have been fully realised. The youth grew, and became *himself* a labourer in the mission field. For many years he taught in the Sabbath school, most devotedly and acceptably. In due time admitted a member of the church, he continued to labour most faithfully. He rose to the foremost rank in his profession, and became as much respected in the counting-room as he was useful in the church; while in the department of literature he has greatly distinguished himself, and done good service.

"*A great change here.*"—The party here referred to had been regularly waiting upon the means of grace; and, through a blessing on the

combined agencies of the Temperance Society and a preached Gospel, a great change had been effected.

One day, in the course of his usual visitations, the wife related to the missionary, with tears of joy, what a change had been wrought upon her husband, and how family worship had been established. "*Oh, sir,*" she said, "*there has been a great change here!* One Sabbath lately you pressed hard upon the congregation the importance of family prayer. I said to my husband at night, when about to go to bed, 'Now we must begin worship this night;' and added, 'If you will not, I will.' I then went and laid down the Bible, when worship was at once begun by him; and I cannot tell the happiness and comfort it has brought to our home. *There is a great change here!*"

Unlooked-for fruit.—This came very strikingly out in the experience of one who was very much opposed to the work of the missionary, who even made light of the very idea of true Christianity.

By an apparently trivial incident, she was induced to attend public worship. The truth first arrested her attention, and afterwards, through the blessing from on high, reached her heart. Under deep impression, after leaving church, she said to a friend, "*So long as I am able, I shall be a hearer there.*" This proved to be no mere resolution, but was carried out with great regularity and earnestness, until disease laid her on a bed of sickness, which proved to be a bed of death. A frequent visitor during her illness, the missionary endeavoured to minister the consolations of the Gospel. A lovely little daughter was occasionally in the sick-room, and appeared to give much attention to what was spoken. The mother gradually declined, drooped like a flower, and died, giving clear and satisfactory evidence of a gracious change—calmly reposing on the work of the Redeemer.

Early fruit.—Some time after, the missionary was sent for hurriedly to see this little girl, who

had been suddenly prostrated through brain disease, and was thought to be fast dying.

Unconscious as regarded almost everything, but the great concerns of eternity, she not only gave "diligent heed" to the words of comfort addressed to her, but *became herself* a comforter and a ministering angel to others. To her nurse she spoke with the most touching tenderness, urging her to close with Jesus Christ at once and for ever. "*O Aggie, Aggie, woman ! will ye no seek Jesus ?*" As her father stood weeping by her bed, throwing her loving arms around him, she, with true simplicity and child-like entreaty, urged him to lay hold on eternal life—pleading in accents the most tender and affectionate to do so—that they might meet in heaven, where the fond mother had gone before. The scene cannot be depicted, but cannot be forgotten. That chamber of death became indeed like a little "*Bochim*," and, as the missionary retired after the spirit *had* passed away, these words of inspiration

left their impress deep upon his heart,—were seen in a clearer and fuller light,—“*Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength.*”

A devoted wife.—It were not easy to describe the feelings of the writer, one Sabbath, on beholding the wreck of an *inebriate*, sitting with deep attention and emotion in the church. In due course an acquaintance was formed with him and his family, and his history, when learned, proved to be a very sad one. He was a habitual drunkard, and although in receipt of high wages, the family was in the deepest depths of poverty. How that devoted wife struggled with difficulties to keep the wolf from the door, it were too much to tell; it would be regarded as fabulous.

When it is stated that, year after year, that noble woman strove against the tide of trial and temptation, want and woe, and braved the ills of her lot with calm, if not cheerful resignation;

when it is added that, to support her family, she toiled like a slave to buy bread, and bones for soup—sold the bones again—and thus traded, toiled, strove, and struggled, without a murmuring or complaining word,—a faint idea may be obtained of what was endured, and what was accomplished. The darkest hour precedes the dawn; and the day dawned here, to the comfort of a devoted wife and family, and to the glory of a gracious God.

The means of grace, through the Divine blessing, had become effectual, and another soul was rescued from the power—the all but omnipotent grasp—of the fell destroyer. If there be “joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth,” what joy, too, is caused on earth below! Many years have come and gone since that change took place. Happiness now lights up the eye of that loving wife, while calm contentment and true peace seem to be throned on her brow; grace has been made to glow in the

heart of that husband, and has made their home truly happy :

“I have been there, and still would go ;
’Tis like a little heaven below.”

Lilies among thorns.—How Christianity lives, and bears its precious fruits, even in the most unpromising circumstances, and how faith can triumph through and over severe trial and tribulation, and in the deepest depths of poverty, the following may illustrate :—

Many a happy heart has the writer had when visiting good old Sarah. She lived in a poorly-furnished little room, with a devoted son. Both were truly converted, and had for years given clear proof and evidence of the same. Many a time had they suffered from extreme poverty, but they had learned to trust in Him who is “the widow’s Judge,” and the “Father of the fatherless.” On one occasion Sarah seemed grieved in spirit, and fearing something unusual had

happened, she was pressed to tell the cause. The tea-kettle was boiling merrily and cheerily on the front of the little grate; the table was laid out as if for a simple repast; there was one thin "lean crust" of bread in the basket,—and when the question was put if she had nothing more in the house to eat, with a simplicity for which she was noted, and a characteristic mode of expression, which all that knew her would recognise she said, as nearly as can be remembered, "I jis put the kittle on to be boiling, an' it shoud please God to send me some tay, and I'm a waitin till His ain time come for something to ate and oh! isn't He kind to send you?"

"Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone,
Laughs at impossibilities,
And says it shall be done."

Hers was a happy death, and so was that of her devoted son; they were truly "lovely an

pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided."

"The communion-table was naething like this."

—In the course of sick visitations, the missionary one day came upon an intensely interesting case—that of a middle-aged man who was dying of consumption. He had been for a considerable time declining, and, like many such cases, might be said to be literally *walking* to the grave. The crisis came, and on being visited by the writer, he was asked if now he found comfort in the prospect of death. His answer was truly touching. Looking calmly up, he whispered in broken utterances, as the extreme weakness would permit, "*The communion-table was naething like this !*" On being reminded of the happy communion days in the mission church, and how much he had enjoyed them, he assented, saying, "*Oh, yes ; but the communion-table was naething like this !*" Shortly after this he fell asleep in Jesus, in the spirit of the godly father of one of the writer's congre-

gation, who, speechless on his dying-bed, and being asked if he was happy, took the cap from his brow, and silently waved it in token of his joy

"Godliness profitable unto all things."—One of the most interesting cases that have come out of the mission work, is that of a man and his family who had been living in great carelessness, and regardless of public ordinances. Something moved him *"to try and do better,"* as he expressed it, and the first step towards this was to begin and go to church. He got a *new coat* for the occasion, determined to hold on and persevere in the good way. He soon found it was a hard work he had undertaken; but, being of a persevering disposition, he continued to attend regularly on ordinances, notwithstanding his many difficulties and temptations to return to his former course. The truth took hold of his heart, and temperance had prepared him for the reception of it, and his course from that time has been one of *even, onward progress*. From temperance

raised to the higher platform of true Christianity, his career, both for time and eternity, has been a singularly prosperous one. Without a penny in the world, and deep in debt, when he came to be a hearer in connection with the Mission, he is now living an ornament to the Christian faith, and is the head of a large manufactory—an honoured and respected master—one who has learned and felt experimentally that “godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” This is not all. Very many, who have been through his instrumentality brought to follow the course which he has so laudably and so successfully pursued, and many that have adopted as their motto what has been so thoroughly experienced by him,—“*Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you,*”—are members and office-bearers of the church along with him.

To him, and not a few others in the mission

church, the writer records his deep acknowledgments for the good done by them, and specially for leading so many to wait upon the public ordinances of religion.

As also illustrative of how "*godliness is profitable unto all things*," it may be stated here how greatly improved the position and circumstances of many members of the congregation have become. This is only what might have been expected, and yet the fact should be recorded for the encouragement of others. A very considerable number of the congregation have become their own landlords, and are living in their own houses.

This number is a steadily increasing one ; and, there can be no doubt that, in times of prosperity, many of those who are engaged in skilled labour are placed in a condition in which, with economy and sobriety, this object may be attained.

It were not a difficult thing to give further details—to give testimony both from living lip,

and from the records of the Mission, where the cases are fully recorded—of the words and deeds of those departed, who have been saved ; but we forbear, and close this part of our brief sketch with an extract from a statement which was prepared by the kirk-session, and which has already appeared in the authorised *Record* of the Free Church. It is as follows :—

“ The session, while rejoicing at the numerical strength of the congregation, and desiring that the Holy Spirit would give still more efficacy to the means of grace, have good reason to report that there are those being added to the church of ‘such as shall be saved,’ of whom it shall be said, when the Lord Himself writeth up the people, “This man and that man was born in her.”

The object of this statement would be very much lost were the idea taken up that the field is thoroughly cultivated, and no more remains to be done. Such is not—never can be, the case. It is well known that in our city districts the


population is very fluctuating. Those who have received most benefit through the Mission are often the first to remove, and their places are taken by others, either from country districts, or from other parts of the town ; so that, in a very short time, the inhabitants of a district become greatly changed. A mission field can never be *wrought out*. It is rather like the fields of earth, requiring the constant and regular ploughing and sowing, that fruit may be obtained. The numbers given appear large, but, with an active, energetic agency, and proper accommodation provided, greater results might be realised. Only the Territorial system, thoroughly wrought, can reach this class. As an evidence of the working of the scheme in this district, it may be stated that, in *one* of its streets there were no fewer than *eighty families* at one time in communion with the mission church, while there is scarcely a *land or stair* in the *whole district* that has not yielded rich fruit to the Mission ; and that, after

twenty years have elapsed, with all the consequent changes and vicissitudes, *more than one half* of the congregation still live in *the immediate neighbourhood* of the church.

Conclusion. — Having briefly sketched the *mode or manner* of working, the *agencies* employed, the *results* of the work, and the *necessity for earnest prayer* for the Divine blessing, the writer desires to close the record with the heartfelt expression of his conviction that the Territorial system is pre-eminently adapted to the wants and necessities of the outlying population, whether in town or country. In both spheres he has had opportunities of testing its capabilities, and has the most unbounded confidence in the special adaptation of the scheme for the work in view. Success may be speedy or slow, according to the character of the people, and the devotion and energy of the agents employed ; but, when fairly wrought out, “in due season” the scheme will prosper, and be accompanied with true success.

If in the work, as a humble labourer, or by this imperfect sketch of it, the writer has, in the faintest, feeblest manner, done or written anything to advance a cause which lies so near to his own heart—if he has made *one home* happy, *one heart* glad—he will lay, as now he desires to lay, the tribute of his praise on the altar of his great and glorious Redeemer, and adopt the words of inspiration as his own, “*Not unto us, O Lord ! not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory.*” “EBENEZER !”



HE names of the late Lady Mary Hamilton, Professor Miller, and Dr Guthrie, have become so interwoven with the work of the Pleasance Mission, that the writer feels he could not satisfactorily complete this brief record without a special allusion to them ; and, accordingly, he adds the following verses, which were written at the time of their death :—

IN MEMORY OF THE LADY MARY HAMILTON.

Like star of mild radiance, delightfully shining,
Through vapoury curtain revealing its sheen ;
Or flower of sweet perfume, with beauty combining,
Its graces concealing 'neath petals of green :
So, veil'd in humility, cottage and mansion
Were cheer'd by thy presence and lit by thy smile ;
The p  r and the peasant, thy name as they mention,
Together will bless Him who lent thee awhile.

Like star at its setting, the ether suffusing,
Dissolving away in the azure above,
So, faithful through grace, now in glory diffusing
A radiance undying o'er regions of love !

We mourn thee on earth, but they welcome in heaven,
Whose smile has no sorrow, and gladness no gloom ;
And skyward we'll gaze, that through faith may be given
To us aye to dwell where the amaranths bloom.

Like star in the firmament, shining for ever
With brightest effulgence of heavenly light ;
So bright shines thy lustre, where darkness shall never
Be known through the ages of endless delight !
In realms of the blest, oh ! how great is the glory !
Ecstatic the joy, immortal the crown !
Of love so amazing, rehearsing the story—
The warfare accomplish'd, the victory won !

In Memoriam.

PROFESSOR JAMES MILLER, F.R.S.E.

DIED 17TH JUNE 1864.

Honour to the mighty brave,
Patriots who have died to save,—
Ever green shall be their grave,
Memory live alway !

Deeds like theirs shall long endure,
Writ with gold in marble pure ;
Or, with point of diamond sure,
On the rock for aye !

Moral heroes never die !
Suns of purer, brighter sky,
Setting here, they rise on high,
In unending day !

Such the noble hero gone :
Here his course sublimely run,
There the prize and victory won,
Oh, how blest for aye !

Each good cause from very core
Loving much—aye more and more—
Nobly he our banner bore
On unflinchingly.

From his hand, in death still true,
Pluck that sturdy banner blue,
And the phalanx lead anew
On to victory !

In Memoriam.

THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.

DIED 24TH FEBRUARY 1873.

Is the great Scottish Prince of Preachers dead ?

Will raptured thousands hear his voice no more ?

A *Cedar's* fallen—*fir-tree* bow thy head :

The MASTER'S will be done—own, and adore !

GUTHRIE ! what memories wreathe around thy name !

In lone drear cell thy footprints we may trace,

Thy large heart bleeding o'er the victim's shame,

And big tears coursing down thy manly face !

A preacher rich in imagery's glow,

Impassion'd eloquence pour'd from thy lip,

Sweeping as cataract's resistless flow,

Or gentle as the dew the flow'rets sip !

Now waking latent powers that smote the rock,

Whence well'd a hidden spring of briny tears ;

Or, like the electric current's thrilling shock,

That made the heedless reel through guilty fears !

A faithful preacher, too, as thousands tell,
And thousands more who welcome thee above ;
How many bosoms here now heave and swell,
From THRONE to *cot*, with sympathy and love ?
Bodied with Truth, and plumed with Faith, thy *Pleas*
Made ears to tingle, hearts tide to the full,
And thereby many a lost one found release
From untold misery in thy RAGGED SCHOOL !

No monument thou need'st—none would we raise,
Thy name shall live in lasting *deeds* for aye,
In rescued thousands taught THE LORD to praise,
To live for heaven, and tread the pilgrim-way.
Then rest thou from thy labours—calmly rest,
In hope of life eternal from the tomb,—
Rest in THE LORD, supremely, surely blest,
Until the cry be heard, "THE BRIDEGROOM'S COME !"





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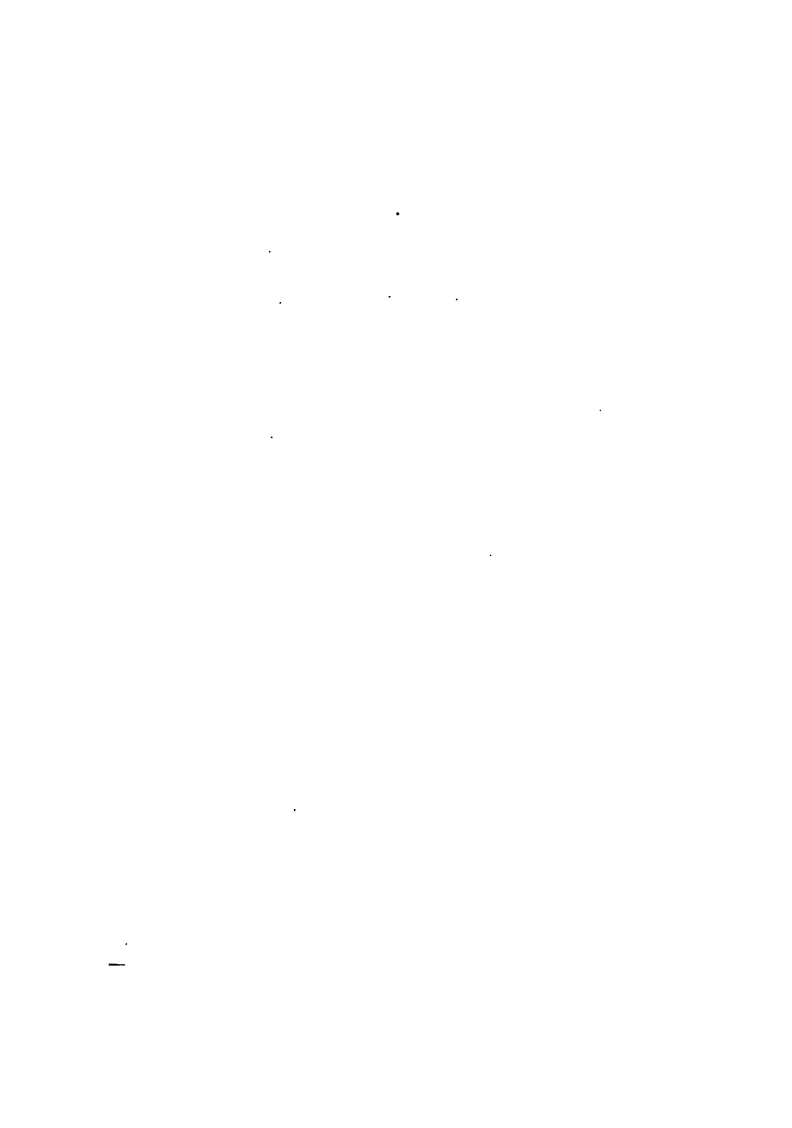
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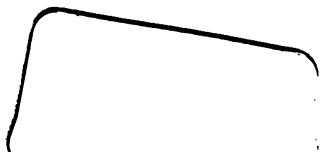


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